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## Effect of secure attachment style based on mother- adolescent training on reducing depression in female adolescents

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### Abstract

The main objective of this research is to determine the effect of secure attachment style based on mother- adolescent training on reducing depression in female adolescents. The research method was quasi experimental with pre test-post test design and control group. Results indicated that the post-test values have been affected by the independent variable. ( $F=11.018$ ,  $P<0.05$ ). According to the results it could be concluded that secure attachment style based on mother- adolescent training program had a positive effect on reducing depression in female adolescents.

**Keywords:** attachment styles, mother-adolescent training, depression, mother, adolescent;

### 1. Introduction

Depression is accounted as an important psychological problem in adolescence period which harms adolescent's psychological performance in adulthood as well as teens (Verduyn et al., 2009). Research findings confirm that treatment of this disorder is not just dependent to the positive symptoms like good temperament, anhedonia, changing sleep time and appetite. Improvement of person's interaction with around environment plays a totally important role (Bosc, 2000). Hence, one of the parameters in all types of depression is insecure attachment and matters related to it (Green, 2007). Various surveys on depressed people demonstrate that quality of attachment between child and parent is damaged in these persons. Conforming to evidences, there is a special connection between depression and insecure attachment styles such as preoccupied and to somewhat fearful styles (Margoless et al., 2005) and depression is observed in all insecure attachment styles (Johnson and Whiffen, 2003).

Insecure attachment creates little internalized feeling of security. The insecurely attached person is unlikely to cope with a stressful occasion and could probably experience depression. Such persons might interpret interpersonal incidents negatively as their own demerit and low self-efficacy which may produce depression symptoms itself. These people have negative attributive styles and suffer from mental cud towards depression symptoms and consequences which is an inappropriate coping strategy (Margoless et al., 2005). There are miscellaneous methods like therapeutic methods such as drug, interpersonal, cognitive-behavioral and family therapy and psychoanalysis

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ones to treat depression (Sadock and Sadock, 2003). However, basic difference of family therapy with other approaches is that in contrast to other methods, family therapy focuses on the quality and adjustment of parent-child relationships, instead of concentrating on adolescent's depression as a factor that produces undesirable outcomes in the family. According to mother-adolescent training method, direct conversation on communicational deficiencies is a mechanism by which persons form and develop secure attachment. Helping adolescents to recognize important things for them and helping parents to get serious children's concerns is an outstanding feature and major principal of attachment based therapy (Diamond, 2002).

Considering aforementioned issues, this research aims to answer this question: How much mother-adolescent training method based on secure attachment (derived from ABFT) which is founded on attachment and interpersonal relationships theory is effective on relieving depression disorder.

### 1.1. Research Premises

#### 1.1.1. Hypotheses No. 1

Mother-adolescent training based on secure attachment style is influential on reducing female adolescents' depression.

#### 1.1.2. Hypotheses No. 2

Efficiency of mother-adolescent training based on secure attachment style is influential on reducing female adolescents' depression in follow up phase remains constant.

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Universe and sample

Sampling method in the first step was in available Sampling method. Initially, two high schools in district 2 of Tehran with 995 students were selected. Then, from first to third and pre university grade, first grade was randomly chosen and screening was performed through short form of Beck's depression inventory (scores equal to 8 and over) on 308 first grade high school students. As the third step, 30 persons were picked out from screened depressed adolescents and were divided into two groups with 15 members called test and control.

In the present research a group of girls with their mothers participated who should retain following features:

1. Mother must not be illiterate.
2. The adolescent must not be a divorce child.
3. Any of parents must not be dead.

In addition, rejection factors are as follow:

1. Absence of girls in the first two sessions of training.
2. Absence of mothers in the first two sessions of training.
3. Happening a stressful incident such as death of a near relative or divorcing parents during training sessions.

Considering following factors, one member of each of groups were omitted as a result of dying one's brother and parents' separation and consequently, number of group members reduced to 14.

Table 1- Demographic features of the participants

Groups	Number	Gender	(Mean± SD) Age	Grades
Intervention	14	All Female	15±0.5	First High school
Control	14	All Female	15±0.5	First High school

## 2.2. Measures

Beck's depression inventory (BDI), short form

In this research, short form of Beck's depression inventory was applied to screen depressed adolescents. This test was also used for pre-test, post-test and follows up. This test comprises 13 questions with 4 options and answers were scored from 0 to 3. Results show that short form of Beck's depression inventory is a reliable tool to determine and diagnose moderate and severe depression (Furlanetto et al., 2005).

## 2.3. Procedure

This survey is based on a semi-experimental study which includes pre-test, post-test and control group. In this study both test and control groups were evaluated for four times. First measurements involved pre-test, second evaluation was in last session as the post-test and final assessment was made 2 months after completing training program for follow up.

Therapeutic session's details:

After randomly selection of test group members, sessions of mother-adolescent training based on secure attachment style was held in 12 sessions for 2 hours as following:

Session 1- First session included introducing training course, instructor's and participants' responsibility, a general elucidation about concepts of depression and attachment and explaining main principals and platform of team working. Sessions 2 & 3- These sessions were spent to concentrate on recognition of adolescents' capabilities in order to bring about unity and encouraging them to make changes in their relationships and express their discontents, complaints and discomforts. Sessions 4, 5 & 6- These three sessions were only devoted to mothers and encompassed identification of mothers' abilities, focusing on their unpleasant experiences of attachment to their parents, making them aware of adolescents' expression and improving relationships with them.

Session 7- In the seventh session which was dedicated to girls, short form of Beck's test was given in order to assess the effectiveness of training in the middle of the course. Additionally, they were prepared and encouraged to talk to their mothers about complaints and discontents and correctly establish and manage relationships with mothers in the ninth session. Session 8- During the eighth session, mothers were prepared to face with their daughters through encouraging them to listen to daughters' grumbles and discomforts in future sessions and training them to how establish an interactive relationship with girls, the relationship which is set to be developed in the next session.

Session 9- In this session all of the participants were present and the instructor helped adolescents to express their feelings properly and encouraged mothers to listen carefully to the details of their daughters' grumbles and discomforts. Session 10- The tenth session devoted to mothers and attempt to increase quality and quantity of experiences related to their relationships with their daughters and personal issues and make them aware of adolescents' ostracism reasons. Session 11- The eleventh session dedicated to girls. The instructor tried to persuade them to stop blaming parents, taking problems more serious and shouldering more responsibility. Session 12- During final session conversation was applied for solving problems and the instructor emphasize on personal capabilities in establishing a better relationship with each other, social support of family to improve mother-adolescent relations and encouraging families to continue this trend. Ultimately, short Beck's depression inventory was taken as the post-test and it was planned to have the follow up after 2 months.

## 2.4. Data analysis

Data In this Analysis of data, ANOVA with repeated measurement test is applied through spss 16 pack.

### 3. Result

According Premise 1- Mother-adolescent training based on secure attachment style is influential on reducing female adolescents' depression.

Table 2- summary of multivariate variance related to assessment of depression in test and control groups

	Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Test * group	Pillai's Trace	.380	7.670	2.000	25.000	.003
	Wilks' Lambda	.620	7.670	2.000	25.000	.003
	Hotelling's Trace	.614	7.670	2.000	25.000	.003
	Roy's Largest Root	.614	7.670	2.000	25.000	.003

In accordance with data presented in above table, all statistical levels are significant with confidence level=0.05 and degree of freedom= 3. Hence, it could be deduced that there is a meaningful difference between test and control groups in the context of depression.

Table 3- analysis of independent variable influence on dependent variable

	Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Test	Sphericity Assumed	.151	2	.076	1.705	.192
	Greenhouse-Geisser	.151	1.668	.091	1.705	.197
	Huynh-Feldt	.151	1.838	.082	1.705	.195
	Lower-bound	.151	1.000	.151	1.705	.203
Test * group	Sphericity Assumed	1.005	2	.502	11.340	.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	1.005	1.668	.602	11.340	.000
	Huynh-Feldt	1.005	1.838	.547	11.340	.000
	Lower-bound	1.005	1.000	1.005	11.340	.002
Error(Test)	Sphericity Assumed	2.304	52	.044		
	Greenhouse-Geisser	2.304	43.379	.053		
	Huynh-Feldt	2.304	47.782	.048		
	Lower-bound	2.304	26.000	.089		

In the analysis of independent variable influence on dependent variable (Table3), calculated F indicator of independent variable influence is significant ( $f=11.340$ ) with  $df=1.838$  in confidence level of 0.05 and first hypothesis is confirmed ( $P<0.05$ )

Table 4- Comparison of mean score in both test and control groups for depression factor in triplet levels.

	group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
pre-test	Experimental	.9945	.47175	14
	Control	1.0549	.38335	14
	Total	1.0247	.42291	28
post-tests	Experimental	.6923	.54810	14
	Control	1.1593	.57284	14

	Total	.9258	.59932	28
follow up	Experimental	.6648	.55026	14
	Control	1.2308	.50577	14
	Total	.9478	.59328	28

Conforming to the findings mentioned in table 4, mean score of depression for test group has fallen down from 0.9945 in pre-test to 0.6923 in post-test.

**Premise 2-** Efficiency of mother-adolescent training based on secure attachment style is influential on reducing female adolescents' depression in follow up phase remains constant.

As stated in table 4, decline in depression scores is observed in follow up phase for test group. So, the proceeding of decreasing depression scores has continued to follow up phase and had reached from 0.6923 in post-test to 0.6648 in follow up phase.

#### 4. Discussion

Premise 1- Mother-adolescent training based on secure attachment style is influential on reducing female adolescents' depression.

Outcomes of this premise are in agreement with findings of Diamond et al., (2002) and Diamond et al., (2010). They applied three methods of MDFT, ABFT and CBT to treat drug abuse adolescents and declared that ABFT is a new and quite appropriate method to treat drug abuse which could be significantly helpful for these adolescents.

To explain above mentioned premise it could be said that, attachment to parents might lead to psychological wellbeing in adolescents (Nelis and Rae, 2009). Strategies of stress and negative emotions management root in the early relationships between participant and instructor. These strategies eventuate in appearance of secure and insecure attachment styles (anxious and avoidant) in the child (Moran et al., 2008). Another experimental result of this study is that a depressed adolescent's psychic health improved by feeling security and understanding this fact that her mother loves her unconditionally. Furthermore, she became capable of challenging their unreasonable demands and behavior while facing with existing contrasts with their families, logically and fairly.

Premise 2- Efficiency of mother-adolescent training based on secure attachment style is influential on reducing female adolescents' depression in follow up phase remains constant.

Findings of this research are in line with a research done by Siqueland, Rynn, and Diamond (2004). They figured out that results of the study remained in the follow up phase for both methods of CBT, and combination of CBT and ABFT. Plus, these outcomes are supported by a study done by Slensnick and Prestopnik (2005). They found that by using family therapy based on ecology of a group of adolescents, the effect of treatment was lasting 12 months after follow up.

To elucidate above premise, it is mentionable that continuation of depression relief through this method means the continuation of recovered attachment relationships and this might prove that mother-adolescent training based on secure attachment style had been successful in two contexts: one in reducing the level of depression and another in improving attachment relationships. Reduction of depression and its discontinuation may prevent unfavorable consequences of this disorder in the context of negative emotional experiences (Rubeis and Hollenstein 2009), dangerous behaviors for the health such as smoking, fatness etc. (Katon et al., 2010), suicide and interpersonal problems in relationships with family and friends (Gruenbaum et al., 2010).

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